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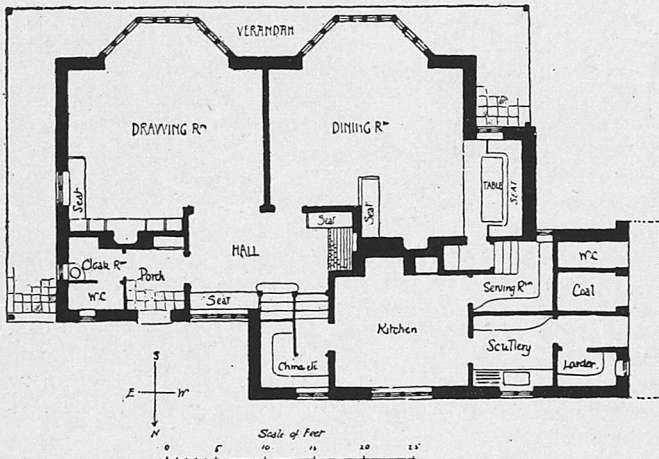
## AN ARTIST'S HOME.

BY M. H. BAILLIE SCOTT.

O THE average man, who is not an artist, the artistic aspect in the making of a home is rarely appreciated or understood. To him it is enough if the drains be properly trapped, the gas-metre in

working order, the rooms lofty, and the windows large. If art is to be admitted at all it is only as a kind of ornamental fringe to all this, banished perhaps to the edge of the roof, where it blossoms as the latest and sweetest thing in ridge tiles and finials, or appearing in the drawing-room in the form of an injudicious application of Aspinall's enamel.

A primrose by a river's brim,  
A yellow primrose was to him,  
And it was nothing more.



THE HOUSE PLAN. GROUND FLOOR.

So sang the poet of one Peter Bell, a most prosaic individual.

The family of Bell is far from being extinct, and to them, as to the original Peter, a primrose is a primrose, and a house is a house.

And nothing more, alas! They cannot understand all this talk about wall-papers and furniture, nor do they see how such material things may become the medium of artistic expression.

But to the artist who is not of the tribe of Peter the importance of a harmonious environment is at once acknowledged. He meets his brother artist, the architect, on his own ground, understands his aim and aspirations, and so helps him to achieve a successful result in his quest for the beautiful and the true.

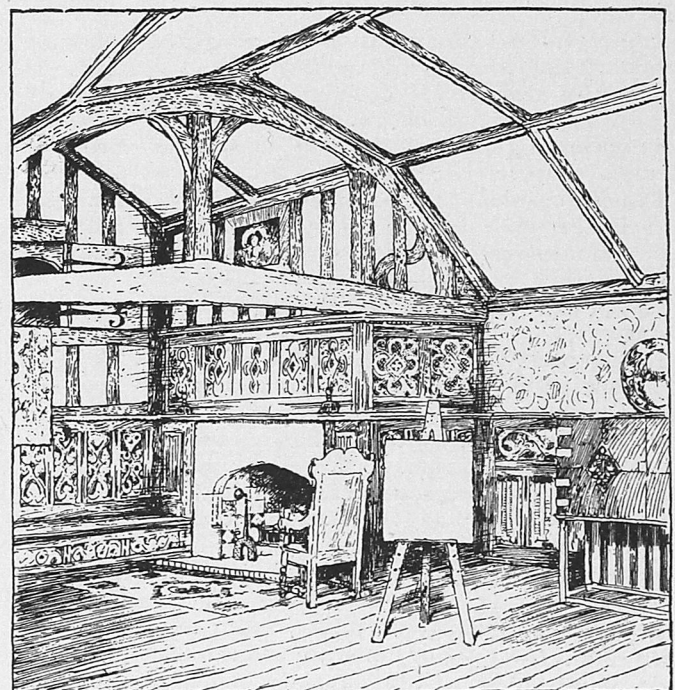
It is, therefore, with few misgivings and under the most favorable auspices, that the architect begins his task of planning and building a house for an artist. No gloomy visions of atrocious furniture, which he dares not condemn, rise before him as he works to mar the mental picture of the completed house, and it will not be his lot on this occasion to experience the mortification of seeing his work frustrated and misunderstood, and his pearls trampled under foot. It will not,

perhaps, be too much to assume that the artist of to-day is sufficiently catholic to recognize the aim and scope of decorative work, and to stray outside the confines of the gilded frame. In the decoration of the house, which is the subject of this article, he will find an ample field for such excursions from the pictorial. With a little blue paint, mixed with oil of aniseed, or lavender, he may add the decorative feeling of an artist to the *technique* of a child of ten, and produce tiles for his fireplaces as quaint and charming as the Dutch. He may decorate his walls and fabrics with stencils cunningly designed, he may carve the panels of his doors or hammer the copper for his grates. And so may gradually be acquired that unique individual quality which is quite beyond the reach of those whose decoration consists of a selection, however happy, of stock commercial patterns. At first sight it may seem somewhat futile, and perhaps a little arrogant, to design special patterns when there are so many beautiful things to be obtained in the shops; but the decorative superiority of a perhaps intrinsically inferior design in this case consists mainly in its relation to its surroundings and suitability to its position, considerations which far outweigh the individual merit of a particular design.

"A poor thing, but my own"—that should be the motto of the artist, and the same principle should be carried as far as possible into the construction and decoration of every detail. The fastenings for the doors and windows, the grates and furniture, all should be specially designed for their special positions and not selected from the pattern-book of the manufacturer.

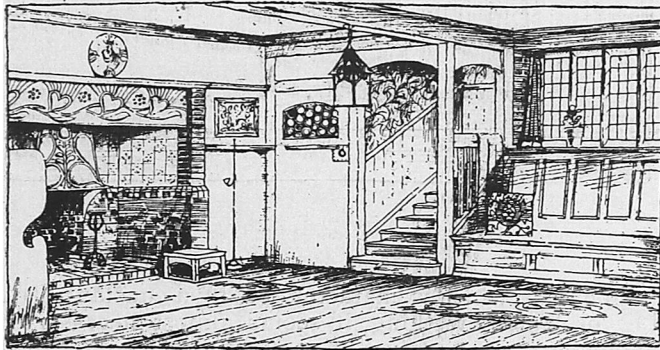
It is given to few artists to build a large house, and so in the accompanying plans it has been the aim of the author to try and secure comfort and beauty at a comparatively small outlay.

The usual method for designing a small house may be thus formulated:—Take a comparatively large house with the full complement of rooms which conventional-ity has decreed to be essential, and compress the plan till all the rooms are reduced to the smallest possible dimensions. Then augment these cramped conditions



THE STUDIO.

by filling these rooms with heavy furniture, and finally, having covered every available inch of floor space, bewail the lack of means which results in such discomfort and endeavor to discover what degree of pleasure may be conveyed by a lofty ceiling under these conditions. For it is an article of faith that however small the rooms not one single inch shall be abated from the ceiling. The final results of this scheme of house planning will probably be that the family having acquired their three or more lofty "reception" rooms will inhabit, perhaps, only one of these and keep the others damp and musty for a special occasion which never comes. It is thus suburban villas are formed, and so the very name of villa has come to suggest a genteel discomfort.



THE ENTRANCE HALL.

A small house is not, however, necessarily uncomfortable, and there are still cottages and farmhouses left in the country to prove the fact. To build one, however, it is necessary in the first place to clear our minds from conventional ideas and to base the plan on our own actual habit of life. There is probably, for instance, one room which almost inevitably becomes the general family sitting-room, especially in the evenings, and in a small house this room is very often the dining-room. For where economy of firing becomes necessary, the warmth and comfort of the dining-room on a winter evening will often make an adjournment to the drawing-room undesired where the fire, perhaps, has not been lighted till late and a general chilliness prevails.

The dining-room thus becomes a place not severely set apart for meals, but to some extent a living-room for the family, and so in planning it due consideration must be paid to this fact.

The first drawback which strikes one in the ordinary dining-room is the general clearance of the table which becomes necessary before a meal and the general disturbance so caused; and another very serious one, especially in a small room, is the atmosphere of food, which is both unpleasant and unsanitary.

Under these circumstances the problem which presents itself for solution is the formation of a dining-room in which the above disadvantages may be obviated. With this object, in the house which is here illustrated, a cosy recess, fitted with seating, has been planned, and in this recess the dining-table is placed. When the dinner is being laid the curtains which screen the recess from the room may be drawn across the opening, the table being laid from the small serving room adjoining the dining recess, and so the servant does not require to pass through the room at all.

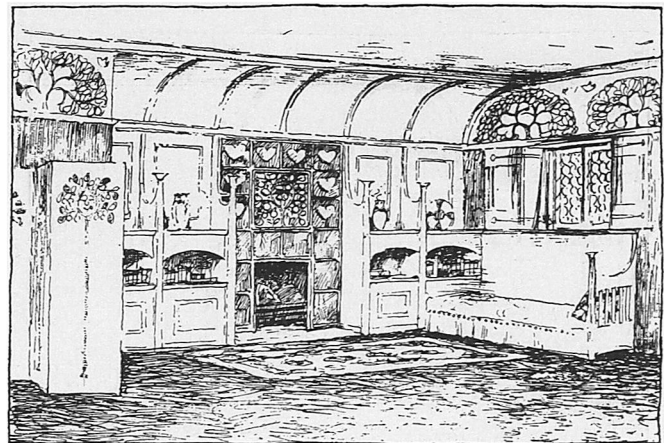
When ready the curtains are drawn displaying the table, bright with dainty glass and flowers, lighted by a central hanging lamp or candles against the dark background of the seats. And so, apart from the obvious practical advantages, the effect would be far more artistic than the ordinary arrangement of the dining-table, which lacks focus and from any point of view hardly composes pictorially. There would be something also specially charming and almost theatrical in the parted curtains and the suddenly revealed brightness of glass and silver, and not only is an interior effect obtained which is far more artistic than the average dining-room, but everything may be worked with that quiet orderliness which may have been felt to be an impossibility under the cramping conditions of a small house. The position of the recess in which the dining-table is placed would allow of efficient ventilation, and the serving would be done from the front unoccupied side of the dining-table, while, if on special occasions this table proves too small to accommodate the guests, it may be supplemented by another table in the room itself. A secondary use which also suggests itself for a recess of this kind is as a small stage for private theatricals or tableaux.

The illustration of the interior of this dining-room shows a suggested scheme for the treatment of the fireplace with a quaint cupboard over the mantelshelf, blue and white tiles on each side of the grate, and above these a band of *repoussé* copper.

The projecting settle by the fire with the standard lamp and copper-hood adds to the cosiness of the fire-side, and the position of the door is so related to the ingle-nook and dining recess that these features are not immediately disclosed on entering the room, but appear as a pleasant surprise round the corner.

The whole of the decorative treatment of this room may be somewhat low in tone, suggesting warmth, harmony and comfort, and the same character should mark every detail of its furniture. In order to get the greatest possible change of environment, the drawing-room may be treated in a much higher key, and instead of warm sober coloring brightness and gaiety of hue may prevail. The one room will thus act as a foil to the other, and so the particular qualities of each will be enhanced by contrast. The illustration shows the proposed treatment of the drawing-room fireplace with its white enameled woodwork and *repoussé* copper.

In the hall the principal feature is the ingle-nook with its hearth of redbrick, wrought-iron fire-dogs and hood of *repoussé* copper. The lower part of the walls in the ingle are lined with red brick, and the upper part with



THE DRAWING-ROOM.



blue and white tiles, and on one side of the hearth is fixed a quaint settle. The staircase, which opens off the hall as shown in the illustration, is treated very simply, and on the first landing is the door to the studio.

The illustrations will, perhaps, suggest the homely treatment of this room with its massive central principal and paneled roof. At one end of the room there is a gallery with shutters, and the opposite end may be used for the display of pictures. The studio is lighted by a northern window, which may be further supplemented by roof lights in the paneled ceiling, and a small window on the south side will add to the cheerfulness of the room.

In the planning and decoration of the bedrooms it should be remembered that a bedroom must always be considered as a potential sick room.

In our normal condition we may, perhaps, afford to ignore our surroundings, but in illness every detail of decoration is forced upon our attention, and while ugly things become hideous nightmares, beautiful things charm and soothe us as they never did before.

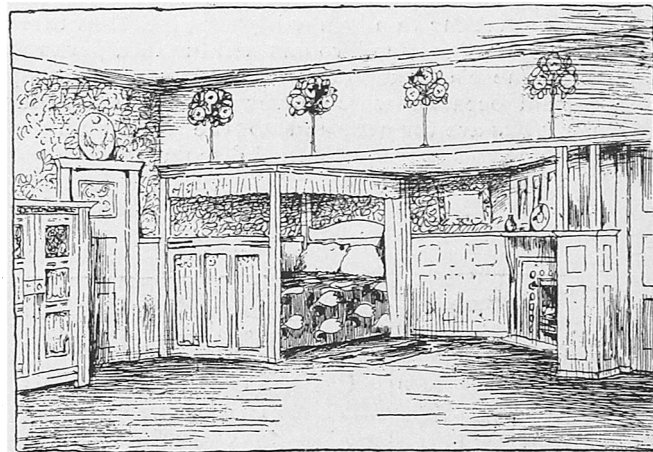
Above all, the decorative aspect of things is here as elsewhere of the first importance, for to the patient the pictures appear but as patterns in color and gilt, and the ornaments as spots and patches of brightness or of shade, and so it becomes a problem for the designer to arrange all these things harmoniously so that there is nothing in the room which does aught but suggest and invite repose.

The illustrations show the proposed treatment of two of the bedrooms on the first floor. On the second floor there are two good attics and a box-room.

In describing the exterior of the house, it is perhaps hardly enough to say that the walls are of red brick and half timber work, and the roof covered with red tiles, for the picture conveyed by such a description is rather a crude and glaring one. It may perhaps suggest nothing better than machine made bricks, neatly pointed with black mortar, and tiles of so superior a quality that no weather will mellow their harsh coloring. If we add to these half-timber work constructed of inch planks nailed on the brick wall, we may get a fairly complete idea of a modern version of a picturesque half-timbered house.

But those who have learnt to appreciate the skill of Nature as a colorist will not be so ready to refuse her aid in putting the finishing mellow touches to their work, and this will lead to the use of materials which weather readily, and which not only become more beautiful in themselves, but also appear as part of their

natural surroundings. As will be seen by a glance at the illustrations of the exterior, the general treatment is based on the old English domestic work, of which so many charming examples are to be found in the country.



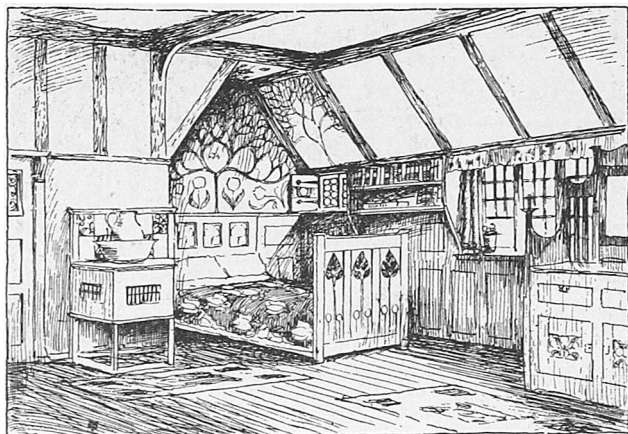
A BEDROOM.

In an age which is characterized by a constant striving for some new thing, it seems almost necessary to apologize for the revival of so much that is mediæval. To produce with chronological accuracy the features of any given period with all the correct mouldings—if that were all that is implied by the revival of a past style—might well be condemned. But the architect who aims at the root of the matter will be more concerned with the attainment of certain qualities which seem to have reached their highest degree of expression in the old buildings.

In domestic work it seems that nothing so far has been done to surpass the old work in the expression of those qualities which are implied by the word "home," and which are so well suggested by that picture in the Palace of Art.

And one a home-grey twilight poured,  
On dewy pastures, dewy trees,  
Softer than sleep; all things in order stored,  
A haunt of ancient Peace.

And so, in trying to realize a similar ideal, it seems natural to use the same materials as far as possible in the same way, and to repudiate all this heritage of beautiful work seems as unreasonable as to attempt to produce lifeless and mechanical copies of it.



A BEDROOM.

THE superabundant metal fastenings of old French windows, and the chaste door furniture still to be found in such palaces as Versailles and Fontainebleau afford us many charming *motifs* of design which are highly applicable to modern metal work of a similar character. The fashionableness of the Louis Quinze and Louis Seize styles makes such old examples eminently useful to the present day art worker, and will serve as ideas and models for new conceptions in the style so much in vogue at the present time among our leading furnishers and decorators. The incomparable work of Gouthière, which is now deservedly treasured like jewelry, was characterized by the most delicate design and finish, and even the more ordinary productions of his time were in a large measure influenced by the delightful style that he so plentifully introduced.